

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 245

By McDonald

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Johnny Maddox for his contributions to the world of music and excellence in the musical genres of ragtime and blues.

WHEREAS, Tennessee has long been known throughout the world for its rich music heritage; from the hills of East Tennessee through Music City U.S.A. to the shores of the Mississippi, the talented musicians of this State have earned a reputation that is unsurpassed in the history of American music; and

WHEREAS, born August 4, 1927, in Gallatin, Tennessee, Johnny Maddox was soon to take the world of ragtime and blues by storm; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Maddox's love for music was fueled by his Aunt Zula Cothron, who played ragtime piano at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. This talented woman transferred her love for and talent of musical performance to Johnny when she taught him to play piano; and

WHEREAS, this amazing young musician played his first public concert at the age of five and began his professional career when he was only twelve-years-old; and

WHEREAS, during his rise as an unparalleled ragtime star, Johnny Maddox worked with his friend, Randy Wood, at Randy's Record Shop in Gallatin. When Randy launched Dot Records in 1950, Johnny was the first artist signed, and Johnny's instant success helped build Dot Records into one of the most successful labels in the 1950's; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Maddox's first singles "Crazy Bone Rag" and "St. Louis Tickle" sold over 22,000 copies in five weeks; and

WHEREAS, this talented piano player continued to record for Dot Records even through its acquisition by MCA in the 1970's, and during his career with Dot and MCA, Johnny recorded a noteworthy total of fifty albums and eighty-seven singles; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Maddox is one of the leading ragtime piano players of all time and was America's number one jukebox artist in 1954, when he recorded the first all-piano record in history, *The Crazy Otto Medley*. This album spent an amazing fourteen weeks at the top of the charts and became the first ragtime record to sell over 1,000,000 copies, eventually selling over 2,000,000; and

WHEREAS, from these superb albums and recordings, Johnny Maddox garnered many accolades, including nine gold singles and total record sales of over 11,000,000; and

WHEREAS, the pinnacle of many performers' careers, Johnny Maddox has received his own star on Hollywood Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Maddox knew and played with many of the leading ragtime artists as well as many of the major artists of the 1950's, including Patsy Cline, Eddy Arnold, W.C. Handy, Joe Jordan, Charles L. Johnson, Clyde McCoy, Ted Lewis, Tony Pastor, Lawrence Welk, Sammy Kay, and Eddy Howard. This dedicated professional has played in every state except Oregon and Hawaii and has appeared on countless shows, including the legendary *Ed Sullivan Show*; and

WHEREAS, a true musical genius, Johnny Maddox plays his music in the original dance tempos, and his immediately recognizable, rollicking style, brings vividly to life the era of ragtime and blues; and

WHEREAS, a performer as well as an avid collector of music, Johnny Maddox is a noted musicologist and collector of ragtime and early American music; his collection includes over 30,000 78rpm records, Edison wax cylinders and piano rolls. His sheet music collection is conservatively estimated at 200,000 pieces, 3,000 of which he knows by heart; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to join in celebrating the numerous contributions made to ragtime and blues music during Johnny Maddox's illustrious career; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED
FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE
CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Johnny Maddox for bringing happiness to his
countless fans and for playing a significant role in the growth of ragtime and blues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared
for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.